

To the Honourable the chosen and betruſted Knights, Citizens and Burgeſſes in PARLIAMENT Aſſembled. *Cup. 21 g. 27/25*

The humble Petition of divers wel-affected Free-born People of *England*, inhabiting in and about EAST-SMITHFIELD and VVAPPING, and other parts adjacent-

S H E W E T H,

THat as this Honourable Houſe was choſen by the people to redreſſe their grievances; ſo we conceive it our native right to meet together to frame and promote Petitions, for your better information of all ſuch things as are by experience found burthenſome and grievous to the Common-wealth, That accordingly this honourable Houſe hath declared, that it ought to receive Petitions, *though againſt things eſtabliſhed by Law*: That in the uſe of this our native and acknowledged right we (together with Lieutenant Col. John Lilburn, and Mr. John Wildman) were met together in *East-Smithfield* upon the 17. of January laſt, and diſcourſed upon theſe enſuing particulars, viz. *Some ſcrupled the very petitioning this Houſe any more, As a thing from whence (notwithſtanding their having hazarded their lives for their freedoms) they had hitherto received nothing but reproaches and injuries, and were answered (by one of the perſons before named) to this effect. That it was their duty alwaies, and their wiſdom, in this juncture of time, to uſe their utmoſt diligences to procure the ſettle- ment of the Common-wealth, and that war, famine, and confuſion could no other way in (probability) be prevented. And it was generally concluded, that the moſt viſible intereſt of the people was, to uphold the Honour of this Houſe, and to pre- ſerve it from contempt.*

2. There was likewiſe an occaſionall diſcourſe about the right of the Lords to the Law-giving power, And herein was debated the danger of ſuch an Arbitrary Authority (as that is in its own nature) reſiding in any perſons during life, and much more of its diſcending as an inheritance from Generation to Generation, and ſomething was added from our ſad experience of the miſchiefs which have enſued hereupon In particular, it was declared, how their exerciſe of that claime might be charged in reaſon with all the precious blood that hath been ſpilt in the late war, becauſe the King had never had opportunity to levy an Army againſt the People and Parliament, if the Lords had not deferred ſo long after many ſolicitations by the Commons to paſſe the Ordinance for ſetting the Militia.

3. It was alſo accidentally wondred at why LIEUTENANT GENERAL CROMWEL and COMMISSARY GENERAL IRETON, ſhould now of late urge that no more addreſſes ſhould be made to the King, whereas they have formerly pleaded, that he might be brought in even with his negative voyce. Whereupon Lieut. Col. Lilburn related a ſtory, That a member of the Houſe of Commons (having information from a credible perſon, that the King had promiſed Lieut. General Cromwell, a blew Ribond with a George, and the Earldome of Eſſex, beſides other places of honour and profit to his Sonne. Com. Gen. Ireton) reſolved rather to become another Felton than to ſuffer his Country to be ſo betrayed: But the Gentleman being diſſwaded by friends, and intelligence hereof being ſent to the Lieut. General, a Faſt enſued at the Head quarters, and ſo he concurred with the Houſe in the late Votes againſt the King. Nevertheleſſe in Mr. Wildmans opinion, he was neceſſitated into ſuch a turn, becauſe THE SCOTS having bid HIGHER for the King then he had done, his offer was rejected, and they relied on.

4. Some conſideration was had about proportionable aſſiſtances towards the charge of Printing our Petitions.

5. It being among other things enquired, whether there were any truth in this rumour, That the Lords had ſent to Lieut. Col. Lilburne, and offered him 3000. l. to aſſiſt in the large Petition now abroad. The Lieut. Col. answered, that it was a falſe groundleſſe report, and that he knew no occaſion for it, unleſſe it were becauſe a Lord had ſent to him to tell him, he would ſend him a token of his love, if he thought it would be accepted. To which he answered, That he would not be engaged to any Patentee Lord, and ſome other words to that effect.

6. There was a relation made by a perſon, that ſome poor people in THE COUNTRY did meet together in Companies, and did violently take away the Corne as it was going to Market, ſaying that it was their great neceſſity cauſed them ſo to do: whereupon, we fearing leſt the calamity might be more generall, did aſk how wee ſhould beſt preſerve our ſelves in caſe of ſuch Tumults, becauſe we bore the names of Round-heads INDEPENDANTS, &c. for adhering to the Parliament? and were ſatisfied by Lieut. Col. Lilburn to this purpoſe. Friends, The only way for you to be ſecured is to promote this Petition to the Houſe, that ſo when the people come to be informed (by the Petition) of your real intentions to the common good of the whole Nation, as well as to your own, you will be thereby ſafer then thoſe which have Blew Ribons in their hats, that being the Generals colours and the moderne badge of protection.

7. It was laſtly delivered as from a good hand, That ſome LORDS were willing their Law-giving power ſhould not deſcend as an inheritance to their poſterity, and that they were willing to part with their privilege of freedom from arreſts.

This being the ſum and principall matter of what paſſed at the aforeſaid meeting, as we are ready to atteſt upon our oaths, if we ſhall be thereunto called. And underſtanding that our ſaid deare Friends Lieut. Col. John Lilburn, & Mr. John Wildman (who are therefore deare to us becauſe they have manifeſted themſelves faithfull to the Publique) ſtand committed by this Houſe, in relation to the ſaid Meeting as Treasonable & ſeditious practiſers againſt the State, We cannot but be extremely troubled, not only in regard of their particular ſufferings and our own equal concernment, eſpecially upon the conſequence thereof, as tending in a great meaſure to the diſfranchiſement of the Nation, from whom the liberty of complaining muſt then be taken away, when moſt cauſe is given them to complaine.

Wherefore your Petitioners do moſt humbly pray, That L. C. Lilburn & Mr. John Wildman, may be forthwith enlarged, our ſelves ſecured, and with the reſt of our Countrymen encouraged in a peaceable manner, to make their addreſſes to this honourable Houſe, and to render fruitleſſe the practiſes of all ſuch, as under any coate ſhall ſeek to ſow diſcord betwene you and yours.

And your Petitioners ſhall pray, &c.

James Worts.
Roger Sawyer.
Henry Giding.
Thomas Chapman.
Valent. Elſing.

Dennis Liddall.
George Browne.
Edward Pardo.
Tho. Goddard.
Tho. Cullet.

Thomas Williams.
John Merikſt.
Mich. Reeve.
John North.
John Wells.

Edward Floyd.
Robert Bageſſe.
John Sowden.
Rob. Levite.
Andrew Dedman.